1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

142
291
302
342
482
415
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FRONTISPIECE:

Phaggu and Family.

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[P. 11]

Chapter II

THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF THE KOLS

There is considerable variation in the material culture of the Kols. This is due to the economic changes which rapidly occur when these primitive people come into contact with cities and their industrial order. The Kols make excellent workers, and in many of the industrial centres of Central India the majority of the cheap labour is supplied by them. This group, however, is not typical of the Kols; and the following description of their material culture is based upon the village Kol, who, while having considerable contact with modern influences, still clings mostly to the older ways known to his people for centuries.

The Village. While this study is particularly of the Kols who are in contact with Hindu culture, nevertheless a few words should be written about the more primitive Kols who live in villages tucked away in some rather inaccessible spot. Such villages are usually not found among the trees of the forest, but in an open space. The form which the village takes depends on the terrain and also upon the general custom of the area. The Gonds generally build their houses in separate enclosures, each an individual unit. We have found a few Kol villages of this type. Sometimes there have been two or three houses within a thorny stockade.

It is more usual, however, to find the Kols grouped together as a single unit. The form of the primitive village varies, but the shoestring type predominates. The village has but the one central pathway which winds between small courts plastered with mud and cow dung situated immediately in front of the house. The court is usually clean, the pathway seldom so.

Primitive villages do not show many signs of permanency. The huts are of a type that can be destroyed over night if it should seem wise to shift the village. In actual practice, however, the Kol does not make a move quickly. Most of these villages though very temporary in their make-up have nevertheless been in existence for years.

The cattle sheds, where they exist, form a part of the hut and may only be distinguished from human habitations by the fact that they are more open. The Kols do not keep pigs, nor do they have gardens about their huts. Sometimes a form of pumpkin may be allowed to grow by the wall and climb over the roof. A *nim* tree (*Melia azadirachta*) will usually be found on the central pathway and under it a raised platform of mud where most of the village worship is observed. There are, generally speaking, no well defined village

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361 boundaries. Such boundaries exist in theory, but are not always
[796] marked out. The religious ceremonies which are supposed to take them into account just go round the outskirts of the village, paying no particular attention to supposed boundary points.

363 The ordinary Kol village is not a pretentious affair. There will be one or two central paths, three to ten feet wide and up to 200 yards long, which are the main streets and which the houses face. If the terrain permits, these paths usually run in a northerly-southerly
[364] direction and are often winding. Between the houses there are little lanes through which one may squeeze to get to the back of the village
[342] where the trash is thrown. The houses are made of *chatai* walls plastered with mud, or possibly of thick mud walls. The roof is usually of grass, but cheap country tiles are frequently employed. A two-storied house is unknown except in the larger towns where brick is used and some wealthy person resides. There is no street in the ordinary sense of the word and the lanes which provide the outlets for the
361 various houses are narrow, dirty and tortuous. The individual group may have two small buildings, one of which houses the cattle, though
[343 it is not unusual to find the cattle kept on the veranda. It is from
231] such a village that the labourers go out to their fields which not in-
[241] frequently lie from two to three miles distant from the village. On the edge of most villages are seen a few meaner huts grouped together
621 and in these one usually finds the depressed and the untouchables.
564 The fact is at once known by the pigs which are all about such houses.
735 Where Kols do not have their own village and are attached to some larger village or hamlet the two groups usually live on the edge; but the Kol, generally speaking, is more cleanly than the lower groups whose houses occasionally adjoin his dwelling place. When questioned why they live apart the answer has usually taken a three-fold form:
[262] It is claimed first that Hindus do not like to have Kols living near them because they (the Kols) eat meat and especially pork, which is consumed at the time of sacrifice. The next reason is an economic one: Kols are too poor to rent lands or pay the house rent required in the
[427] villages. One rupee a year is the maximum paid outside the village and sometimes nothing is required save a bit of help to the *malguzar* or landlord when he needs labourers in his fields. Kols also claim that if they live in close proximity to the higher castes they would not be free to sing and play the drum the whole night through, a thing which they consider necessary at certain times of worship.

184 LIVING CONDITIONS. There is a good deal of variation in the
342 conditions under which the Kols live. In places where tenancy is
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1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

assured, they build houses which may favourably be compared even with those of the poorer Brahmins. Such well-built houses are of mud walls about two feet thick, a tiled roof laid out on bamboo poles and a fairly large courtyard. We found the houses and courtyards in Barela scrupulously clean. Refuse, however, was thrown into the manure pits right alongside the houses. In Kharara Ghat the houses were not of the same standard of cleanliness as in Barela. There seemed to be no particular direction which the houses must face. Enquiries revealed that there was no particular objection to having the door face toward the south. To some Hindus this is the direction of the dwelling place of the God of Death, *Yama*, and there should be no door that way. Most houses seemed to have no central courtyard, such as is common in Santali villages. If two houses face each other, both houses have a courtyard and there is a common pathway between. The mud walls, inside and outside, the floors and the courtyard are plastered with a mixture of cow dung and clay. There is generally but one room in the average house, and it is littered up with many things. There is found somewhere a large sun-dried mud urn, large enough for a man to get into, and in this is stored the grain so that it may not be destroyed by rats and moisture.[1] There are baskets and tools in the corners; on bamboo poles stretched just across the top of the mud walls, not much higher than the head, hang clothes, rags and tattered bedding. In one corner, the view of which is generally hidden as one enters the low door, is the cooking department with its stone mill and *chulhas* and a few pots for cooking purposes. There will be a few bottles for oil, and a few tins, usually old tins once thrown away by some city dweller, in which are kept such things as salt and spices used in the preparation of the meal. This is a description of the better type of house. In summer it is dark and cool. There are no windows and all the light comes through the door leading to a small veranda.

On the other hand, there is the meaner type of house. At Barela there were numbers of these alongside of other better houses. The pictures show the differences.[2] These ruder huts have no veranda space, though usually there is an attempt at a small courtyard. The doors are so low that one has to get on his hands and knees to enter. The roof is of grass, and usually this type of house does not furnish much protection from rain. The walls are merely bamboo *tati* or just branches woven together and protected by thorns. This type of house is airy compared to the others, but the door can never be locked. In-

1 See Plate vii.
2 See Plate v.

1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

184 side are the few poor possessions of the inmates. The clothes are
342 nearly always on their bodies, and one finds only a few rags, some
[422] cooking utensils, and the like. The floor is damp and poorly plastered.
[735] At Kymore we saw a few houses that even a dog would not consider worthy of entering, which sheltered families. One wonders how in the heat and the rain and the cold a human being can live in such places.

A number of the better grade houses have two rooms. These houses have some veranda space, and here are examples of outside measurements of some of the better types:

26′×7′; 35′×18′; 40′×20′; 39′×23′;
12′×16′; 15′×16′; 15′×12′; 10′×15′.

In one of the above houses that had two rooms one measured 10′×5′ and the other 10′×15′ In these better houses the height of the mud wall is six to seven feet above the level of the floor. Some of the meaner huts measured 5′×10′ and 6′×12′, with walls about three
[592] feet high. In one of these measuring 6′×12′ we found five people living, in another of a similar size four. At Kymore the huts were about seven feet long and three feet wide.

See figures 2 and 3 showing diagrams of typical Kol houses.

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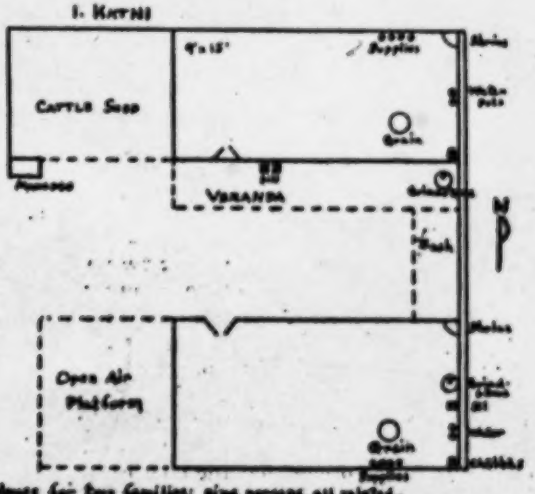
GROUND PLANS OF KOL HOUSES



House for two families: nine persons, all related.
Walls are of mud; roof grass thatched.

Fig. 2.

1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

PLATE V.

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A View of the Kol Mahalla, Jubbulpore.

Primitive Kol Dwellings at Barela. See Fig. 3.

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The Home of an Influential Kol in Barela.

[Facing p. 14]

1;Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

Those who own cattle usually provide for them in a place separate from their own dwellings. They are occasionally given a place on the veranda, but usually a rude hut is erected to one side of the house where the cattle are housed during the night and afforded some measure of protection. In some of the more jungly sections back in the Kaimur hills, we found that a group of houses usually had a thorny stockade built around it.[1] There was one entrance for all, cattle and men. This is for protection from wild animals and an occasional outlaw. In the industrial sections attached to cities like Jubbulpore the Kols are sometimes put in the regular workers' lines; or are at other times

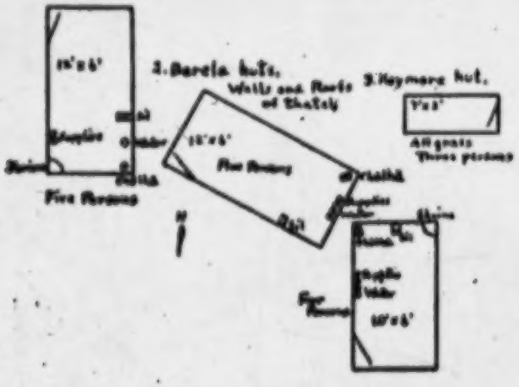

Fig. 3

given a plot of ground and certain materials for building purposes (mostly tiles) and allowed to construct their own village. Some fairly decent houses result, but usually there is no system to the narrow winding paths that lead one amongst the village houses. In Kymore the Cement company is building brick accommodations for their Kol workers. Recently one of the grass huts caught fire while the parents were away at work, and before it could be checked, it had spread to other huts and a number of small children were burned to death.

The problems of sanitation are the same with the Kols as they are all over village India. Filth of all varieties is thrown on the manure pits right alongside the houses, and flies and other insects breed prolifically.

[1] See Plate IV.

1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

PLATE VI.

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[343]

Panagar Kol Dwellings. Note Granary left centre.

Primitive type of House at Barela.

Primitive Hoes in the Kainer Hills.

[facing p. 15]

1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

342 823 [171] [177] [177 791] 342 [782] [789]

BUILDING CUSTOMS. Like their village neighbours about them, Kols have numerous superstitions relating to houses and certain customs in connection with their construction. In India, it has been said, "a house should face north or east and not south or west, as the south is the region of Yama, the God of Death, who lives in Ceylon, and the west is the quarter of the setting sun."[1] Kols are not quite so particular in this respect although due to Hindu influences there is a general tendency to follow this plan. The Kols observe a general rule which is that if the house is to be longer than it is wide, the greatest length should be parallel to the north-south line.

When a new house is about to be built in a village, its actual position is generally determined in relation to the other houses about it. If the position of the house is not limited by other houses, and if there is doubt as to the location, a Hindu *pandit* is sometimes called to help decide the exact place. The *pandit* consults astrological factors as from these he is said to be able to determine whether the place is suitable or not, or if an evil spirit lives on that spot or nearby. If the report should be unfavourable, another spot is selected and the process repeated. When satisfactory, the *pandit* will also fix the day on which work should begin on the construction of the building. For this service he is paid two annas to a rupee according to the ability of the builder to pay.

If the house is not to be permanent little or no ceremony is observed in connection with its building, as it is considered a temporary structure which can be broken up in a few minutes.

If, however, the house is one with mud walls and is of a more permanent nature, there are certain customs which are quite generally observed. The foundation trench is first dug although this may be hardly more than a levelling of the ground on which the walls will stand. A "foundation stone" is usually placed somewhere in the trench, and beneath it are put two pice, some rice coloured yellow with turmeric and an areca nut (*Areca catechu*). The walls are constructed of mud with a certain amount of cow dung and straw mixed in to insure its stability.

One of the pictures[2] shows a Kol house in the process of construction. This particular house was being built on the site of another house. In this case, which was observed for some time, the following customs were noted, and found also to apply to other cases of building.

Just within the threshold of the single entrance to the house there

1 Russell and Hiralal, *The Tribes and Castes of Central Provinces*, Vol. III, p. 88.
2 See Plate VIII.

1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

PLATE III.

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Makkhi of Barela.

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Three Kols with a Brahmin who officiates at certain social ceremonies. Taken near Deori.

[Facing p. 16]

1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

is put a charm to protect it from the demons. In this case pieces of iron were found scattered about : bolts, nuts and scraps from the railway

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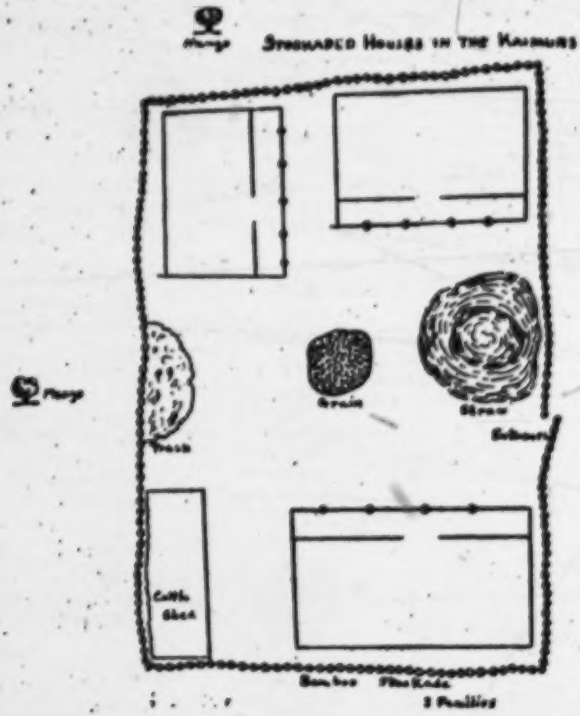

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Fig. 4.

line. There were also rather large pieces of stone scattered here and there under what would be the floor of the house. If obtainable, the best kind of stone to use is said to be the *sil* or grindstone for preparing condiments. At least one should be under the floor of every house, and should be under the section where the cooking is to be done. The *sil* is a symbol of fertility as well as a protector. Another protective device is old leather, and in this case an old shoe was utilized. In the picture such a shoe can be seen to the right, placed on the end of a stick stuck into the wall. As the wall is made higher, this too is

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l:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

PLATE IV.

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Stockaded House in the Kalmer Hills. See also Fig. 4.

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[231]

Village Scenes in Rewa State. Two views of the Dwelling of a Prosperous Kol Farmer.

[Facing p. 17]

1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

342 raised. An old shoe is also generally found along with the iron and
789 stones under the floor. Occasionally bits of dried *tulasi* plant (*Ocymum*
sanctum) are also scattered about the floor or again a bunch of *tulasi*
[824] may be tied at the base of the central pole. This pole stuck in the centre of the house being built is not a part of the permanent construction, but is a device to render the building work satisfactory and protect the home from demons taking possession of it while in the process of construction. On the pole can be seen hanging a basket and in this basket were found pieces of iron and tin, and bits of the outer *lepoed*[1] covering of another house. It may be taken from the walls of a house in which a happily married and prosperous family lived.
[237] In an earthen pot placed on the floor there was a yellowish liquid. The builder told us that this was water, but it had the appearance of cow's
[778 urine, although this could not be confirmed. Occasionally there is a
783] sign of a little shrine about the construction somewhere, which shows signs of the presentation of the *hom* offering.

342 The inner floor of the house will be filled in and packed down after the walls are up. In dwellings of good construction the floor of the interior of the house should be higher than the veranda floor, and the veranda floor should, in turn, be higher than that of the courtyard. Kol houses have no windows, and the door-ways are low. On enter-
[782 ing one must bow, or even get down on hands and knees. Bowing as
788] one enters is said to be a method of showing respect to the household deities. Windows might let in evil forces, hence none is included.

342 Women may aid in building the house, but their work is limited to
462 assisting in building the walls and floor of the house by bringing the earth or water, mixing them and helping to place the mud in the proper place. They take no part, however, in the construction of the
[562 roof. This is not a woman's job, and for a woman to get upon a roof
784] is taboo—a thing that requires punishment or a fine.

342 Kols are able to construct the whole house. If the roof is to
[824 be of grass, the grass is brought from the forests, and *kusa* (*Poa*
323] *cynosuroides*) and *duba* (*Agrestis tinearis*) are generally used. If tiles are utilized, cheap country tiles are obtained from the village potter. The Kol puts the tiles on the roof himself. The only
[335] thing which he cannot make is the door and frame, but these may be bought quite cheaply in the markets or may be made for him by the village carpenter. They are set in the opening left for the door, and the mud is packed in about them. There is usually but one door to a house. The more primitive types of houses so common among

1 See Glossary, Appendix VI, for meanings of Vernacular terms.

1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

PLATE VIII.

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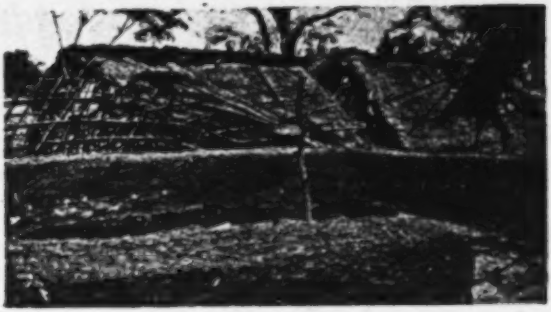

A house in the process of Construction. See text, p. 16.

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Kumhars preparing tiles at Barela.

[Facing p. 19]

1;Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

Kols have neither mud walls nor wooden doors. When they leave the house, a bit of thorny brush is put in front of the doorway. This will keep out dogs and also any dangerous spirit which may be seeking admission. 342

When the building of a house is completed, there is usually a dedicatory ceremony consisting of installing and worshipping the household god or goddess or both, and a small niche in a corner or in the side wall is reserved for this purpose. The place is marked with *sendur* and the *hom* sacrifice is made. An offering of a chicken or young goat may also be made at the village shrine. A *tulasi* plant should also be planted somewhere in the courtyard. 342 776 778

DAILY LIFE. The daily life of the village and forest Kol centres mainly about the problem of daily bread. Before daybreak the women are up and are the first to be seen about the village. They sweep the house, the veranda and the courtyard; fetch water from a nearby stream, well or tank and grind the wheat for the morning meal. The sound of the grindstone is one of the earliest to be heard in a Kol village. The men are also up early, but do not have much to do in the way of household duties unless it is to chop a bit of wood. They wash their faces and rinse out their mouths with water which the women have brought, and, if they have bullocks, these are fed and got ready for the work in the fields; or if this is not to be done, they sit around in the sun in the courtyard and wait for some hot tea, or more probably for rice and *chapati* remaining from the meal of the night before. During the season when the work is heavy, they are in the field not long after the day has dawned, and the village is inhabited only by the women, children and older men. The bullocks for ploughing are driven before them; some of the older boys may assist in this, and the men carry the iron-pointed wooden plough. If some of the men-folk have no work in the fields, they may go into the forest for wood and grass; or, if there is plenty of food in the house and there is no pressing need for money, they sit around in groups and smoke cheap country cigarettes (*biris*) and gossip. 512 [252] [515] [264] [492] [407] [276 521]

In the meantime the women are preparing the morning meal. It is not usual for men and women to eat together. The women and children usually eat about the same time, though when the boys get in their teens, they like to eat with the men. During the middle of the morning, after the meal is nearly ready the women go for their daily bath to a nearby stream or tank. Women bathe every day throughout the year. The men bathe daily in the hot weather, but not so frequently in winter. The women do not remove their clothes when they bathe, though men usually remove all but a loincloth. The women [264] [515]

1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

PLATE XIII.

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Dhunka of Garka - a Rautiya Kol.

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A Kathauta Rautiya with the wooden bowl from which they must eat. Near Kanri.

[FACING p. 38]

1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

846 789 [824] is also a valuable charm against evil spirits and is often used. Ashes from the fire burning within the room are also taken and sprinkled around the cot or around the spot where the newborn infant is lying on the floor. No spirit will dare cross this line of ashes. Ashes are also placed on the door sill to bar access to the house from that direction. Iron is similarly used; bits of nails being driven into the frame about the door, or a piece of iron hung just over it. Sometimes wine may be sprinkled around the delivery room after the *dai* has cleaned up. This attracts the beneficent deities and as a result the evil ones will have to flee. During those six critical nights an elderly man should sleep just outside the doorway. Every form of protection known should be attempted, for there is no telling where *bhuts* may enter as they can come into the house as air does.

853 825 There is a night bird belonging to a class of owls which the Kols greatly fear. This is the night-jar (*Caprimulgus asiaticus*), called by them the *kurset* bird and often known as the goatsucker. As it is particularly fond of human milk this bird is said to watch for the women nursing babies. During the night, when the mother and child are sound asleep, this bird is very active and may slip into the house and draw the milk from the mother's breast. The mother is not aware of this, or if she is dimly conscious of something, she believes that the baby is feeding. For lack of milk the child does not grow, gets thinner and thinner and soon dies. Its constant crying is a sure sign that the *kurset* bird is stealing away its milk. The mother is also affected and may die. The [342] [824] best possible protection against this bird is the closed door (there being no windows), with branches of the *nim* tree hanging over it. He may also be frightened away by ill-sounding noises. These birds, commonly seen in Central India, have a peculiar way of looking at one, as if they were staring and searching for something.

846 The stump of the umbilical cord, called the *nara*, has usually fallen off by the sixth day and this is invariably buried in the floor of the house, and fire kept burning over the place of its burial for six days more. Several things are buried with the cord, although reports vary. [824] Occasionally some *bel* leaves are put with it and it is thus interred; again a few copper pice, some turmeric (*haldi—Curcuma longa*) and *supari* nut (*Areca catechu*) are also buried with it. At other times some grains of rice may be coloured yellow with *haldi* and then dropped one by one into the hole prepared for the cord. As each grain is dropped the name of some relative is called. In the future the child should hold [551] these names in great respect and never call such persons directly by name. This dropping of rice, however, is not usually observed. The burial of the *nara* or cord is said to be very important. It is really a

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of charms used are discussed in the chapter on Magic and Witchcraft.

PUBERTY. From the above mentioned ceremonies until the Kol child reaches puberty, there is little of importance to note. When the first milk tooth falls out the child is told to take it outside near the house, to shut his eyes and to throw it on the roof, never looking to see where it has gone. This will aid in the coming in of the new tooth.

The girl is tattooed when between the ages of ten and twelve and just before her marriage may be given further tattooing. In the Kaimur hills it was said that a woman must be tattooed, for without it Bhagawan would not know how to grasp her and take her spirit on its way to the heavens. No ceremonies occur at the time of tattooing, and apart from saying that it is the custom Kols could give us almost no information on the matter. The designs are usually similar to those of their Hindu neighbours and the actual tattooing is done by the same man who does it for other castes. See the description on pages 28-31.

No particular rites are observed in connection with the girl's first menstruation. At such a time she is asked to stay in the house and if there is a second room into which she can go she retires there. She is not put out into a menstruation hut as is common among some Munda tribes. During the four to six days that the menses last she is considered unclean and should not cook, bring water for the family, nor touch men's clothes. When the menses have ceased she has to go to the village shrine and offer a cocoanut.

Nowhere among the Kols were we able to find any definite trace of puberty rites which are common elsewhere. We were told that a boy of the Kol tribe could only be considered a Kol when he reached the age of twelve to thirteen. In the full sense he becomes of age when he is sixteen. A girl is considered to be of age when she goes to live for good in the house of her husband. No traces were discovered of any ordeal that either sex had to undergo; no scars are made on the body nor were any hair tying ceremonies observed among the groups studied.

Bachelors' Quarters. No trace was found of bachelors' quarters nor of segregated dormitories for boys and girls, which are well-known among the Mundas and allied tribes of Chota Nagpur. The Gonds of Bastar and elsewhere also have them. They have been considered as a place for sex instruction but the system has been widely criticised by the more advanced Mundas and is being abandoned in many places. Other writers have attributed no social or religious importance to these quarters. One writes: "The thing is that the poor people in a village cannot afford to build big houses for themselves containing

1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

PLATE XVI.

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A Group of Kol Children at Barela.

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Children in the Kol Mahalla, Jubbulpore.

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Children of Factory Workers.

[Facing p. 67]

1;Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

342 many rooms and consequently they cannot maintain strict decency in living with their wives when the children grow up."[1] But the phenomenon is too widespread and is linked with too many factors [504] to really bear this explanation. The house for the boys is as a rule the village guest house as well and at its centre there is a pole which is sometimes carved and differs in this respect only from other homes. The girls usually sleep with an elderly widow in another portion of the [513] village. In some places it is reported that the boys and girls sleep together huddled "higgledy-piggledy."[2] We found no trace of these conditions among the Kols, though they may exist among those who live in close contact with other tribes who practice such customs. When Kols were asked how they managed to get along with one room and many children they replied that somehow they could tuck them all in. The absence of separate quarters strengthens the family tie [593 182] and helps to make it a more stable and important unit. There was also no trace of sexual segregation, such as the separating of the husband and the wife, which would also tend to weaken the family.

1 Majumdar, D. C., *The Aborigines of Central India*, p. 88.
2 *Census of India*, 1931, xviii, p. 413.

l:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

PLATE XXIII.

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A Village shrine near Sihora. The Panda stands at the right. The shrine is at the base of a Nim tree.

[292]

A closer view. Note the iron lash, Salagrama stone, flags and spiked sandals.

[facing p. 137]

1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

776 Many of the daily occurrences can be traced to their activity. They are sometimes friendly, but it actually happens that they are more often unfriendly and do their best to injure and annoy human beings. The Kols have mentioned certain kinds of spirits with which they are familiar. A few Kols have claimed actual encounters with them, and yet others were not quite so certain of their existence.

775 761 *The Bhut* is commonly mentioned by the Kol, but the use of the term is frequently in a general sense. Ordinarily this is the spirit of one who has died a sudden or a tragic death. A *bhut* is always of the male gender. The spirit of a man killed by a train is sure to become a wandering *bhut*. So is the spirit of a murdered man, as well as one dying of a dread disease. The general belief is that it will remain in this form for twelve years until released. In a general sense, any man not taken up by Bhagawan after death becomes a wandering *bhut*. [165] Another curious explanation was given. It was claimed that the expectation of life for a Kol is about thirty years, and for this period one must dwell on earth, whether in the body or in the spirit. If a person twenty years of age should die for any reason, his spirit will still have to stay upon the earth for another ten years, and will wander in the form of a *bhut*. A man living past thirty years of age will not become a *bhut* unless he meets a tragic end. The same group also related that during this unexpired period in which the spirit must wander upon the earth, the spirit of a very good man becomes a very evil *bhut*, while the spirit of a very bad man was a friendly and harmless *bhut*!

775 682 The *bhut* of a murdered man is certain to haunt the murderer's family and in the course of time is sure to destroy it. Murder thus means only more trouble and Kols should never resort to it. It is a fact that murders among Kols are very unusual. *Bhuts* as a rule never injure members of their own families and will even help them. Therefore the Kol holds that one should never fear the spirit of a loved one.

775 *Bhuts* and other spirits may enter a room as does the air which comes in everywhere; though the average Kol usually considers that they enter through some larger opening in the house, such as a door [342] or a window. The lack of windows in Kol houses is partly due to this point of view.

The Churel is the spirit of a female who has died in distressing circumstances, especially if the death was caused by child bearing. The *churel* is of dreadful appearance, and her feet, if one would look at them, are turned backwards. She often attempts to seduce men and ruin them. As a rule her front is attractive but she is black and

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776 entering into it in the form of a dog, a cat or an owl. They may assume almost any form and their bite is very poisonous. They can quickly change their shape and appearance. The female type, called *rakshasi* goes about in the likeness of a beautiful girl and seduces men. Nevertheless, this type of demon is easily fooled and if one is clever and does not lose his nerve he can outwit them.

Kols are also familiar with other kinds of spirits such as the *gayal*, the *pisach* and the *kogi*, but little seems to be known about them. The literature on tribes and castes is rich in spiritism and much might be compiled concerning spirits. The above represents the usual Kol point of view.

776 824 775 THE DWELLING PLACE OF SPIRITS. Kols believe that trees are the most likely place for spirits to dwell. The *banyan* tree seems to be the favourite place for the spirit, although it is said that the *churel* prefers a *nim* tree, particularly if broken or dead. It is claimed that the mango and the *bel* trees are not often inhabited by spirits. The tamarind tree is connected with the *jind*.

776 823 Spirits may also dwell in rocks and certain weird shapes in their appearance are probably due to the activity of some spirit living there.

776 825 764 Animals may become habitations for spirits, and some, like the *rakshasas*, freely enter into them. The graveyard and the burning grounds are sure to have some spirits dwelling near them and Kols avoid such places; or if they must pass by, go two by two. Such places should never be approached at night.

776 342 789 It was noted that spirits enter houses through doors and other openings. Doors are therefore generally surrounded by demon-scarers, and windows are never found. Evil spirits also enter and dwell in human beings, coming in through the mouth, eyes, ears or nose; so these points should be especially protected. They may also run up the legs or the arms and suitable bangles are worn to prevent this.

754 THE EVIL EYE: NAZAR. Men and women may also be possessed of an evil power to injure or distress one another. The evil eye, *nazar*, exerts a powerful and dangerous influence and is often evidenced by a squint or the loss of an eye. The person with an evil eye has an inherent power which may be transmitted through a mere glance, and this power strikes one as surely as a bullet. The very glance of such persons is particularly penetrating and it is not good to have any one gaze at you, for it may be that death is in the look. Children are particularly liable to be affected by the evil eye, and ill health and

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789 823 *Iron* is, on the whole, probably the most common of protective metals; and while some put copper above iron, nevertheless in the case of the Kols, iron appears to be more widely used than copper. The use of iron takes many forms. A woman should always have a bit of iron about her as she is usually exposed to evil influences more than are the men folk. This may take the form of a bracelet, an anklet, a ring on the finger, or an iron ring about the neck. Again it may be just a piece of the metal tied somewhere in the garments or on a string about the waist. [755] A sick man should always have iron about him to prevent further demonic influences during his period of helplessness. An iron key is a protective and even nails in shoes are useful in this respect. [513] A piece of iron ought to be under the head as one sleeps and iron nails are often driven into the four corners of a wooden cot should the Kol sleep on one. In the case of children iron helps to repel the evil eye. [585] At the wedding time the bridegroom carries iron about with him, and iron is found in the wedding booth.

Iron protects houses from the entry of evil spirits and makes their habitation there impossible. Therefore, when a house is built [342] iron is buried under the floor, particularly near the threshold. Even though unseen by the human eye it will influence the demons and they fear to enter and abide in the house. [775] Perhaps *bhuts* are thought of as still living in the stone age and dreading the new-fangled iron and its power to break the strongest things of which they know.

789 *Lac*, obtained from the gum of the *Khairwar* tree (*Acacia catechu*), and prepared in the form of bangles and beads, averts the evil eye and [314] wards off spirits. This is variously coloured.

Lampblack is widely used for children and protects them from the evil eye. [751] While it disguises them and renders them less attractive, it also has the practical purpose of protecting the eye from the glare of the sun. The lampblack, mixed with oil to make a paste, is placed just below the eyes and often gives the child a weird and unnatural appearance.

789 237 291 *Leather* is a very common devil-scarer throughout India and has its uses for the Kols, such as the custom of employing it in connection with the building of houses. For protection, in this instance, an old shoe will generally be found stuck somewhere about the wall which is being built. This is apparent in the picture appearing in connection with building customs.[1] If they can be afforded, leather shoes with nails in them are a double protection, and no Kol goes on a long journey without taking a pair of country shoes with him even though he seldom uses [484] them. He will carry them hanging from a stick or in his hands.

1 See plate VIII.

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PLATE XX.

341
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782
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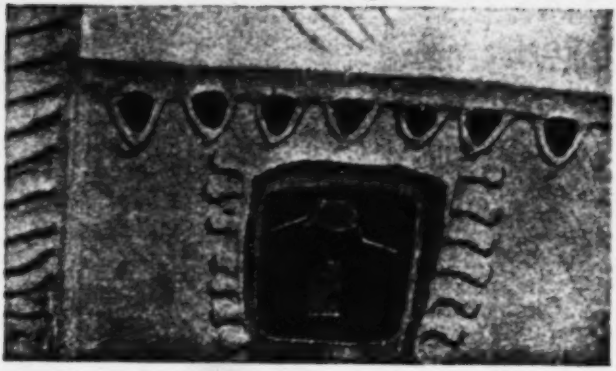


Leaf Cup set in decorated niche in outer Wall.

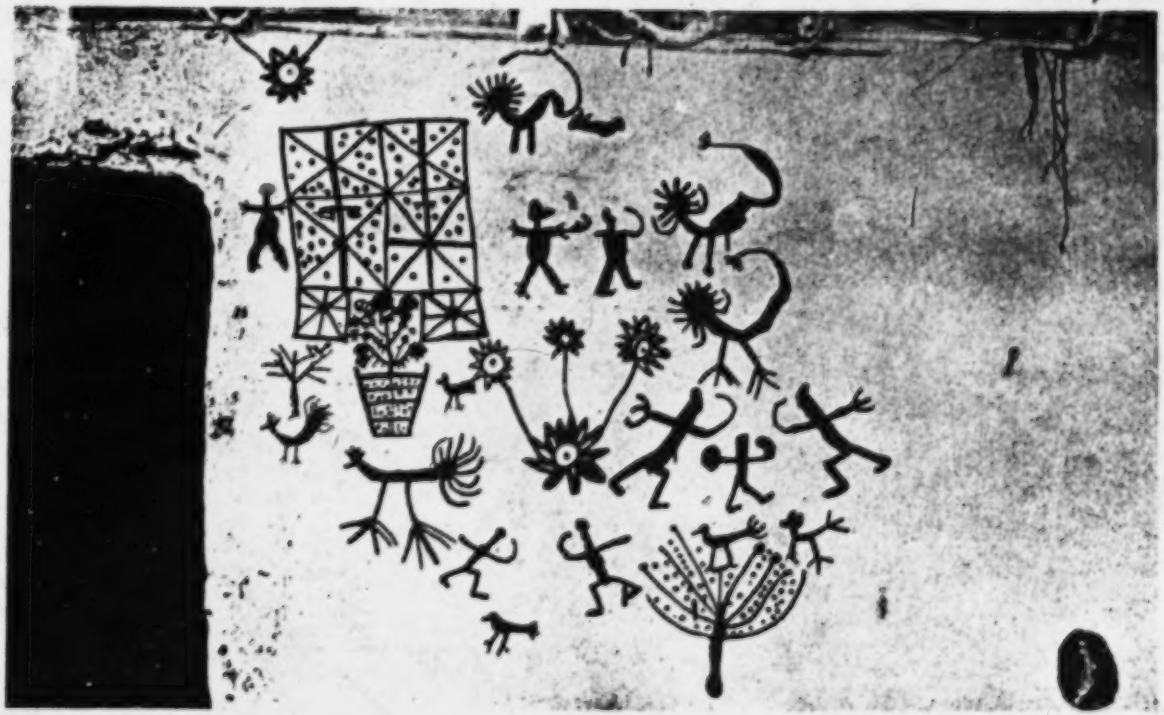
342
532

Peacock Design beside the Threshold of a Koi Dwelling.

[Facing p. 244]

342
532
778

PLATE XXI.



Designs on the wall of a Kol House in Garha. The Figures represent a House, Sunflowers, Men, Tigers, Peacocks, Birds, Flowers and Trees. Dwelling Place of a Devi is at the lower right hand corner.

[FACING p. 246]

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159 In those days there was no road to Nagpur, but only a jungle pathway. We went to Nagpur because we heard that a road was to be started
159 there which was going to Jubbulpore and they wanted Kols to do the
464 work. We began to cut the forest from the Nagpur side and came toward Jubbulpore. But due to some *jadu tonha* (the spell of a magician) our Kols began to die and some of us were very much frightened. My father got permission to leave from the doctor and we came back to Jubbulpore another way, by the jungles of Mandala. Since that time we have lived here at Salivara (about six miles from Jubbulpore) where we have broken stones for the roads and done some other work if we have been able to find it.

159 I have seen two generations come and go and the men about us belong to the third. At present I am supervising work among the
[622] Kols of this place who break stones and they call me *Mukaddam* or the head of the village. My financial condition is much better than the other Kols here because I farm a piece of land and have some goats
● [342 and cattle. I have a wife living with me but do not live in a house
178] with mud walls, but in a *jhopri* or hut. Why? Because our forefathers lived this way and I too prefer this mode of living.

The above life stories are the simple annals of Kols with varying backgrounds, and are recorded as they told them. They omit many things that one might like to know about, but give an insight into
[123] what seems important to them. These stories were obtained only after long acquaintance and friendly contact.

The sketch of Sunnulal reveals a simple man who has stuck to his village with the opportunities it afforded and who has not attempted to break through his environment into the affairs of the outside world. As a result he is contented, and from the economic point of view has everything a village man thinks necessary. He has never had to meet the stresses and strains of an alien type of life.

Bajranji has vivid memories of the great famine and a mother's successful efforts to avert disaster. He shows the independent spirit of the Kol who would rather make a contract for work than take a daily wage and be bossed around.

Motiram, who lives in the "aboriginal belt" has also successfully maintained his independence and built up for himself a satisfactory economic situation. He respects himself and feels he can boss the *panch* and coerce it.

Phaggu is the sad story of a man who has wandered here and there and at the end has nothing to show for it. He is out of harmony

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pounds of wheat for a day's work in the field. If a cash arrangement is entered into, the rate is 1½ annas for the same period of labour. In urban areas the situation is better. In 1911 the average wage was four annas a day. In 1921 it was six annas and ten years later it had increased to nine annas. It was our belief that seven years later wages had considerably fallen. Kol labourers in Jubbulpore industrial plants seldom received more than 5½ annas per day while for the same work in Katni and Maihar they received but four annas. As a rule women workers received about half the above.

It should be kept in mind that we have with the Kols the phenomenon of a primitive and backward people coming into the stream of rural and urban life. Many changes have occurred and many more will take place in the future.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. Kol people live together in groups, either in a section of the village or in a village of their own. Taking the village as a whole it would appear that they are economically well below the average. In certain places, however, they seem to be making a distinct advance as they continue to dwell there and develop a place for themselves in the life of the community. A resident of Barela, not himself a Kol, said that he had been watching them for many years. He said that twenty-five to thirty years ago they were very backward compared to their present condition. At that time they lived in grass huts, wore only loin cloths and in every respect were jungly, backward and inferior; but now the majority of Kols in Barela have houses with tiled roofs and thick mud walls, although the earlier type of dwelling is still occasionally found. This is indicated in Plate V. They now put on better clothing and in general their economic standard seems to be rising. In another place we found Kols putting tiles on their roofs which normally cost Rs. 20 per 1,000. These were being laid on top of the grass thatch. Country tile is more generally used and it costs from ten to twelve rupees to cover the house in this manner. Whenever the Kols are in contact with a somewhat higher culture and have a sense of security as regards lands and tenancy, they tend to make their houses much better than otherwise. Whenever we have asked groups why they have built and are living in such crude houses, they have told us that they do not know from one day to the next whether they will be staying there; and if they have to move on tomorrow they can easily pull up and leave. It is also said that this was the way their forefathers dwelt, and why should they do otherwise. Their employment is very uncertain and hence their houses are crude.